

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

In image processing of a document having image data of a document including an image with character images on a background image, the character images and the background image thereof are separated. First, areas in correspondence to the character images from the image data are extracted, and character code data are generated based on the extracted areas in the image data. On the other hand, the character image in the image data is replaced with the background image. The character images are reproduced with reference to the character code data at the positions of the character images. On the other hand, the original character images are deleted from the image data. The character images on the background image is complemented based on the background image data. Then the character images based on the character code data and the background image thereof are synthesized.

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